

DISPLAYS

FAQ

Q Screen elevation is mentioned in reviews. Why is this important?

A The screen elevation is the distance from the surface of the desk to the bottom of the panel. This information is useful when considering how a monitor will be used. An incorrectly positioned monitor can result in neck ache and shoulder pain.

The top of the screen's panel should be on the same level as the top of your head. That is, your eye level should be between two to three inches lower than the top of the panel. This means that the screen may have to be raised or lowered to get it in the best position for you. If the screen is fixed to a stand, raising it to the correct height may require the use of an additional monitor stand.

You should also place the monitor directly in front of you. If the monitor is 19in or smaller, it should be an arm's length away when you are sitting in your chair. Increase this distance a little if the monitor is 20in or larger.

Lynley Oram

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HANNSPREE Hanns Boston

★★★★★

£129 inc VAT
From www.misco.co.uk

The Hanns Boston is a 19in widescreen monitor from Hannspree's XM series. It certainly does not look like a conventional monitor. Hannspree has given the Hanns Boston a dark brown, wood-effect frame around the screen to give it a retro look. This unusual style won't suit everyone; you'll either love it or hate it. A straw poll in *Shopper's* labs concluded that the surround looked fake, like the sort of iron-on laminate veneer you might find peeling off the edges of a cheap chest of drawers.

This is a shame, as the Hanns Boston's image quality is very good. Both the digital and analogue connections produced a pin-sharp Windows desktop. The screen has a native resolution of 1,440x900, with an aspect ratio of 16:10. The bright 350cd/m² backlight evenly illuminates the display and, although the 700:1 contrast ratio is low by today's standards, blacks were impressively dark while whites were clean and bright. Our colour wheel test and example photos also revealed no problems. Colours were vibrant and realistic, and skin tones looked natural.

The horizontal viewing angle of 150° is narrower than most monitors of this size. However, we were able to take a step to the side without the screen darkening and losing colour accuracy.

The stand can be swivelled from side to side and it is also height adjustable. However, the monitor doesn't use a sliding mechanism, which is commonly found on height-adjustable displays. Instead, you have to remove four screws from the bracket that holds the screen on the matt-black stand. There are holes on



the pole-like stand, into which the screen's bracket is slotted. Once the bracket is moved the screen can be screwed back into the sole other position, giving the choice of a screen elevation of 113mm or 133mm.

There are five large, silver control buttons across the bottom of the screen, which provide access to the onscreen display (OSD). This is basic, but it has the controls most users will need, including brightness, contrast and colour temperature. When the OSD isn't displayed, two of the buttons control the volume.

The Hanns Boston has a pair of built-in 1.2W speakers. Monitor speakers are never of really high quality, but these produced a reasonable sound that

wasn't too tinny and had a bit of bass. We could listen to movie soundtracks comfortably without having to turn the volume up to its highest setting. This was lucky, as the speakers distort at top volume levels.

Hannspree has put together a sturdily built monitor with excellent screen quality. However, the Hanns Boston's unusual style will be off-putting to many buyers.

Lynley Oram

SUMMARY

- ✓ Excellent image quality
- ✓ Adjustable screen height
- ✗ Unappealing wood effect

19in WIDESCREEN LCD 1,440x900 native resolution, 700:1 contrast ratio, 5ms response time (black-to-black), D-sub, DVI, 3.5mm line in
PART CODE M19W1
DETAILS www.hannspree.com/eu

Also consider...

IYYAMA ProLite X486S-B1

★★★★★

£191 inc VAT
From www.oyyy.co.uk



The ProLite X486S-B1 screen's glossy coating makes colours look richer, and the 400cd/m² backlight helps overcome unwelcome reflections. It performs beautifully whether you're editing a spreadsheet or playing a game. Images are sharp, colours are vibrant and skin tones realistic. This LCD is excellent value.

19in LCD 1,280x1,024 native resolution, 700:1 contrast ratio, 2ms response time (black-to-black), D-sub, DVI, one-port USB2 hub PART CODE X486SB1
DETAILS www.iyyama.co.uk

✓ Good picture quality; excellent brightness and contrast

✗ Auto-brightness feature flawed
FULL REVIEW Feb 2007

HANNSG HW223DP

★★★★★

£180 inc VAT
From www.dabs.com



The HW223DP's brushed-silver surround and black stand look classy. The display supports HDCP, so it's great for HD video. An included adaptor allows a component video source to connect to the DVI input. It produces a clear, sharp image using both D-sub and DVI inputs, with colours that look rich and natural.



22in WIDESCREEN LCD 1,680x1,050 native resolution, D-sub, DVI, 3.5mm line-in connectors, four-port USB2 hub, 5ms response time, 800:1 contrast ratio
PART CODE HW223DP
DETAILS www.hannsg.co.uk

✓ Crisp focus; rich colours; component video input
FULL REVIEW Aug 2007

DELL 1800MP

★★★★★

£633 inc VAT
From www.digitaldirect.co.uk



Dell's 1800MP is a good all-round projector, and at this price it's a bargain. It has excellent image quality. Two D-sub VGA connectors allow it to connect to two PCs at once, which means you can switch between two presenters.

If you want a projector for business, this is the best choice, and it's also suitable for watching movies.



OFFICE PROJECTOR DLP 1,024x768 native resolution, 2,000:1 contrast ratio, 2,100 ANSI lumens
PART CODE 1800MP
DETAILS www.dell.co.uk ✓ Good contrast; superb image quality; minimal rainbow effect
FULL REVIEW May 2007

CHIMEI CMV 223D

★★★

£188 inc VAT
From www.afterhours.co.uk

Mirai began to rebrand its monitors as Chimei in 2007. The 22in widescreen CMV 223D is the first Chimei-branded model we've seen.

The screen has a slim 17mm brushed silver bezel and is mounted on a matt black stand, which doesn't feel very sturdy. Just brushing against it causes a considerable amount of wobble. The display isn't height adjustable and it has a rather low screen elevation of 95mm. This means you may need to use a stand to raise the display to a comfortable height to prevent neck strain and backache.

A row of tiny control buttons are located on the underside of the screen. These feel sharp when pressed and are painful on the fingertips. When the onscreen display isn't visible, two of the buttons provide instant access to the brightness and contrast controls. A button, bizarrely labelled Turbo, changes the viewing mode. There are three preset options here: picture mode, text mode and economy. Toggling through each setting simply changes the brightness to preset levels. Each mode worked well for its particular tasks, though.

Both analogue and digital connections produce a crisp Windows desktop at the monitor's native resolution of 1,680x1,050. Like most monitors of this size, the CMV 223D has a contrast ratio of 800:1. However, unlike most 22in widescreen displays, which consume 60W or more, the CMV 223D requires only 49W when in use, making it more economical to run.



Colours were vivid, but not oversaturated. The corners of the display appeared slightly darker and a screen of solid black revealed a little leakage from the backlight across the bottom. No matter how much we fiddled with the controls, we could not get clean whites. Our test screen of solid white was tinged with grey patches, with grey areas at the corners of the screen.

Chimei claims a horizontal viewing angle of 170°. This is quite wide and should allow for a viewing audience of two people. In practice, we found that the image quality deteriorated considerably unless we were sitting directly in

front of the screen. While there are speakers built in, they produce a tinny sound.

The CMV 223D costs £188 including VAT, which is expensive compared to the HannsG HW223DP (see 'Also consider...' below left), which costs £8 less, has a four-port USB2 hub and provides much better image quality.

Lynley Oram

SUMMARY

- ✓ Good colours
- ✗ Greyish whites
- ✗ No height adjustment

22in WIDESCREEN LCD 1,680x1,050 native resolution, 800:1 contrast ratio, 5ms response time (black-to-black), D-sub, DVI, 3.5mm line in
PART CODE CMV223D
DETAILS www.mirai.eu

CHOOSING A... Projector

Follow the steps to find your ideal specs

NATIVE RESOLUTION: 1,024x768
BRIGHTNESS: 1,000 ANSI lumens
CONTRAST RATIO: 500:1
LAMP LIFE: 2,000 hours
CHECK: Weight, throw distance, noise
Recommended minimum in grey

1 Low-cost projectors make two main sacrifices. The brightness, measured in ANSI lumens, will be relatively low and the native resolution will be limited to 1,024x768. Neither need be serious drawbacks if you want to use your projector for presentations or DVDs.

If you want to be ready for High Definition video, though, you'll need a projector with a resolution of at least 1,280x720 and either an HDMI port or HDCP-compliant DVI port.

2 Image quality is obviously important, but this is hard to assess from specifications alone. A high contrast ratio (over 500:1) adds depth to the picture and is usually a benefit of digital light processing (DLP) projectors rather than those using the older LCD technology. The quality of the optics and colour balance cannot be gauged without consulting a review, though.

3 Consider where you'll be using your projector; size and weight are important if the unit will be moved around a lot. You should aim for under 3kg if portability is an issue. Small rooms demand a quiet (sub-33dB) projector and a flexible throw distance; this tells you how close or far away the screen can be. Most projectors can mirror or rotate their image to cope with ceiling mounting or rear projection.

4 Check that the projector can cope with all the signals you might want to feed it. Common video formats are supported by almost all projectors, but high-resolution VGA signals and HDMI may not be. Highly detailed images will display at their best only on pricier projectors with a high-definition resolution.

5 The brightness of the projector will depend on where you need to use it. Projectors with 1,000 ANSI lumens are fine for darkened rooms, but for meeting rooms you should get a minimum of 1,300 ANSI lumens. Remember brighter projectors will cost more to run as their bulbs need replacing more often. An ECO mode reduces the brightness of the projector but increases bulb life.

HITACHI Illumina PJ-TX300

★★★★★

£784 inc VAT
From www.247av.com

BEST BUY The glossy sheen on Hitachi's Illumina PJ-TX300 looks fabulous. This home cinema projector will show a high-quality 203cm image at two metres. If you want a projector to show films then this is an ideal choice, and it's a real bargain, too.



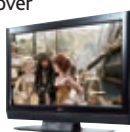
HOME CINEMA PROJECTOR 3-LCD, 1,280x720 native resolution, 10,000:1 contrast ratio, 1,200 ANSI lumens
PART CODE HITPRX63
DETAILS www.hitachidigitalmedia.com
✓ Inexpensive; superb image quality; excellent contrast FULL REVIEW May 2007

LG 37LC55

★★★★★

£512 inc VAT
From www.rgbdirect.co.uk

BEST BUY LG's 37LC55 looks fabulous and has the performance to match. It's great for standard interlaced video sources but comes into its own when handling high-definition (HD) material and progressive scan DVDs. Colours are rich but have a natural appearance. Focus over D-sub and DVI is pin-sharp. This is a great TV at a reasonable price.



37in LCD TV 1,366x768 native resolution, wsub.component, 2x SCART, digital tuner
PART CODE 37LC55 DETAILS www.lge.com
✓ Superb HD video picture quality; excellent computer display; good audio FULL REVIEW Nov 2007

TOSHIBA Regza 32C3030

★★★★★

£489 inc VAT
From www.rgbdirect.co.uk

BEST BUY Picture quality from HD footage and our progressive scan DVD was perfect with the 32C3030. Colours were rich and deep, and blacks looked black. This TV puts in a good all-round performance for a very reasonable price.



32in LCD TV 1,366x768 native resolution, 4,000:1 contrast ratio, 2x HDMI, D-sub, component, 2x SCART
PART CODE 32C3030
DETAILS www.toshiba.co.uk
✓ Superb picture quality; excellent computer display; good audio quality FULL REVIEW Nov 2007